



Increased Public Debate (IPD)

Quarterly Programmatic Report April – June 2005

Associate Award No. 690-A-00-01-00197-08
Under Leader Award No. GEG-A-00-01-00005-00

Submitted by Pact

I. Executive Summary

During this quarter, Pact supported important public debate activities related to media legislation, the Constitution, and the Electoral Act. Particular attention has been given to debate surrounding the anticipated draft of the constitutional review report, scheduled to be released soon to both the government and the public, as pressure mounts to conduct the 2006 tripartite elections under a new constitution.

Subrecipients under the award continue to implement programs on key issues of public debate. MISA Zambia, for example, has been working with the media on the proposed Freedom of Information bill. Pact is also finalizing negotiations with Transparency International Zambia to undertake action research, investigative journalism capacity building, and promotion of media debates on corruption.

As the award is scheduled to conclude in September, much of Pact's focus will now shift towards preparation for program close-out.

II. Background

An assessment of USAID/Zambia's Democracy and Governance SO in February 2001 suggested that more emphasis should be placed on demand-driven strategies. Intermediate Result (IR2) of SO4, "Increased Public Debate," lies at the core of this new approach. A strategy focused on work with the National Assembly to improve outreach and public debate has been replaced by one focused on (1) increased democratic participation in political processes, both electoral and post-electoral/governance-related, and (2) increased participation in public debate on public policy issues through membership organizations.

In September 2001, USAID/Zambia awarded Pact a two-year award to implement the Increased Public Debate program. In November 2002, an additional program component on parliamentary reform was added, reflecting USAID's interest in improving parliamentary outreach and fostering bridges of communication between government and civil society. Pact's parliamentary reform program began with Parliament's own reform agenda as its focus. In its second year, the program maintained its focus on national-level issues such as constitutional reform, anti-corruption, HIV/AIDS, and skills for improved public debate and interaction between government and civil society.

In August 2003, the two-year award was extended through September 2004. In its third year, the program continued with a combination of sub-grants, technical assistance, and targeted capacity building. A new Anti-Corruption Initiative was added, with the aim of strengthening oversight of the Executive through improved performance of parliamentary fiscal committees and civil society watchdog institutions.

The IPD project has now been granted a no-cost extension through September 30, 2005—the end date of USAID Zambia's SO4. The extra time will enable Pact to consolidate program achievements and ensure a smooth and orderly closeout. Pact has been working on key issues of national importance under SO4—principally constitutional and electoral reform, the public order

act, voter awareness, freedom of information and public debate on corruption—that deserve continued attention in the years to come.

III. Key Results This Quarter

During this quarter, Pact has continued to provide management oversight and technical support for the following subgrants:

Theme/ focus area	Partner	Expected results	Status
Electoral reforms	FODEP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced dialogue on electoral reforms. 2. Improved stakeholder collaboration on the electoral reforms and constitutional reform process. 3. Increased number of electoral reform recommendations incorporated in the Electoral Act. 	Funding disbursed and implementation underway.
Freedom of information	MISA Zambia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organizations conducting policy research, forming coalitions & engaging in dialogue through public forums 2. Organizations using existing mechanisms to exchange information with government 3. Organizations providing analysis to ministries, Members of Parliament and Parliamentary Committees 	MISA has produced two live TV programs and two discussion programs, both focused on raising awareness of the need to reintroduce the Freedom of Information bill in Parliament and mobilizing public support. MISA has also continued to publish The Advocate newspaper, focusing on lobbying policy makers in Government on the need to speed up the re-introduction of the FOI bill.
Constitutional review	CCJP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased participation of marginalized groups in the political process. 2. Increased debate on gender issues, HIV/AIDS, constitution and corruption. 3. Increased number of women in political office. 4. Freedom of citizens to participate in political rallies 5. Increased public expression marches 	Funding disbursed and implementation underway.

Voter awareness	AVAP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased awareness of issues debated 2. Increased citizen candidature interactions 3. Increased flow of election related information 4. Number of organizations using existing mechanisms to exchange information with government 5. Number of organizations providing analysis to ministries, Members of Parliament and Parliamentary Committees 	Funding disbursed and implementation underway.
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IV. Comparison of Planned and Actual Activities

Most activities planned for this quarter were completed according to schedule, as outlined above. Five sub grants were planned and approved for the quarter; however, this number was reduced to four after one organization (Citizens Forum) was put in abeyance after failing to meet all of Pact's standard grant management requirements.

V. Activities Planned for Next Quarter

As the project is scheduled to end in September 2005, the following quarter will focus on closeout of subgrants as well as direct program activities. Pact will conduct final compliance visits to subrecipient projects, prepare and execute a close-out plan, and prepare all final reports.

VI. Success Stories/Lessons Learned

During the life of this project, Pact and its partners have provided a critical launch pad for a reinvigorated public debate on key policy reform issues, including electoral reform, constitutional reform, and freedom of information legislation. Project activities have been very well received by both the public and the government. Prospects for sustainability of the public debate agenda are very high, as other funders have shown strong interest in supporting similar activities and organizations.